

condition. Likewise faithfulness, loyalty, and obedience remain marks of God's people. Also, crucial Bible doctrines like God's sovereignty, redemption, wrath, and love permeate 1, 2 Kings" (Author's Preface). House proposes a thorough "theological exegesis," its main elements being "historical, literary, canonical, theological, and applicational concerns."

After explaining his hermeneutical methodology, House proceeds to an introductory outline divided, in harmony with the concerns already detailed, into five parts: Introduction to Historical Issues (authorship, date, chronology, political situation, the text and the miracles of 1 and 2 Kings), Introduction to Literary Issues (genre, structure, plot, and characterization of 1 and 2 Kings), Introduction to Canonical Issues (canonical placement and function of 1 and 2 Kings, and the usage of these two books in Scripture), Introduction to Theological Issues (monotheism vs idolatry, central worship vs high places, covenant loyalty vs. spiritual rebellion, true prophecy vs. lying spiritism, God's covenant with David vs dynastic disintegration, and God's sovereignty vs human pride), and Introduction to Applicational issues (how "to bridge this gap between the ancient text and the modern world" (82), "between the ancient story and the modern audience" (83).

The rest of the book is organized in seven sections: The Rise of Solomon (I 1: 1-2:46), Solomon's Reign (I 3:1-11:43), The Divided Kingdom (I 12:1-16:34), Elijah's Opposition to Idolatry and Oppression (I 17:1-11 1:18), Elisha's Work as Prophet, Miracle Worker, and Kingmaker (II 2:1-13:25), Israel Disintegrates (II 14:1-17:4 1), and Judah Disintegrates (II 18: 1-25:30). Each of these seven main sections is divided into several subsections in discussing the main events portrayed in these two OT books, but the principles of House's "theological exegesis" are consistently applied throughout his commentary.

House's commentary exhibits an excellent organization and is written in a clear and appealing style. One of the results of the focus on the "reading pastor" is the omission of a full bibliography at the end of the book. It is true that at the beginning the author provides a list of over 160 "commonly used sources," and the footnotes provide complete bibliographical information of perhaps more than 200 books, but still a bibliography would have been more scholarly. Nevertheless, V. Philips Long, from Covenant Theological Seminary, is not too far from the truth in suggesting that House's "substantial commentary" of I and II Kings "may be the best thing out to date to assist biblical expositors in mining the riches of these intriguing books."

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Hughes, Richard T. *Reviving the Ancient Faith: The Story of Churches of Christ in America*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996. xiii + 448 pp. \$30.00.

Emerging out of the religious turmoil of the Second Great Awakening, the Churches of Christ now have over 1,700,000 members. Because they have been primarily concerned with restoring primitive Christianity, these churches have had limited interest in their own history, although Earl Irvin West's four-volume

*Search for the Ancient Order* is a significant exception to this generalization. In recent years, greater interest has developed. Robert Hooper concentrated on the twentieth century in *A Distinctive People*, published in 1993, and now Richard T. Hughes of Pepperdine University concentrates on the intellectual history of the Churches of Christ from their nineteenth-century origins to the present.

Hughes identifies four major themes that have shaped the Churches of Christ. First, their attempt to recover primitive Christianity, hence the title of this volume, has been the "defining characteristic" (1) of these churches. Second, the Churches of Christ began as a nineteenth-century sect but have evolved into a twentieth-century denomination. Third, their original sectarianism stemmed from both Alexander Campbell and Barton W. Stone. And fourth, differences in the ways that Campbell and Stone understood Christianity, particularly apocalypticism, postmillennialism, and premillennialism, led to divisions that ultimately split the movement.

In part one, Hughes focuses on the development of the Churches of Christ as a nineteenth-century sect. Alexander Campbell was primarily concerned with the coming millennium, but shifted from an emphasis on recovery of primitive Christianity to an emphasis on Christian unity as a means of moving into the millennium. Through such men as John B. Howard and Benjamin Franklin, Campbell's views led to the conviction that the true church of Christ had been restored, a highly rational and legalistic approach to religion, and denial that the (other) denominations were Christian. Barton W. Stone's apocalypticism, on the other hand, focused on the evil of the world and therefore sought separation from it. This view was most fully developed by David Lipscomb toward the end of the nineteenth century. The differences between these two outlooks led to the splitting of the movement around the turn of the century into the more liberal Disciples of Christ and the more conservative Churches of Christ, the latter located primarily in the South.

Part two examines the twentieth-century development of the Churches of Christ from a sect to a denomination. By the 1930s they had largely pushed premillennialism, represented by R. H. Bole, out of their churches, to a considerable degree because it was associated with pacifism. At the same time, a "grace tradition," tracing back to Stone, began to emerge but in its emphasis on positive teaching frequently simply affirmed the moral values of the surrounding culture. This transformation did not occur easily, for battles took place over legalism, the "hard" or "fighting" style, mission societies, instrumental music in the churches, and the role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life. Loss of their sectarian character, however, led to an accommodation with American culture that supported segregation, accepted the Vietnam War, and resisted the efforts of women to play a more significant role in their churches. As the twenty-first century looms, the author concludes, the Churches of Christ face an identity crisis, for without apocalypticism, they have only restorationism (also called primitivism) to cling to, but a restorationism that now emphasizes the subjective experience of the believer rather than the institutional forms of the church, as had been the case in the nineteenth century. In such a situation, he questions whether the Churches of Christ have a viable reason for their existence as a separate denomination.

In writing this book, Hughes draws extensively on the many journals published by leaders of the movement. In fact, he notes several times that in the absence of intrachurch structures, editors have wielded the authority in the Churches of Christ. While these journals constitute the principal basis for this study, the author also uses books, the Jesse P. Sewell papers located at Abilene Christian University, and private files such as those of John Allen Chalk. In addition to these primary sources, Hughes incorporates previous historical work on the Churches of Christ, including monographs and Ph.D. dissertations, and places his research within the context of contemporary scholarship in American religious history.

The author has constructed from these materials an interesting and convincing analysis, making clear the tensions inherent in the combined influences of Campbell and Stone. David Lipscomb was able to hold both influences together through his apocalypticism and criticism of the Disciples of Christ for their departures from the "ancient order." But increasingly, Hughes states, his followers "abandoned the antimodern, apocalyptic vision of Stone for the rational, progress-oriented outlook of Alexander Campbell" (134). As the churches moved toward denominational status, "those who continued to embrace the apocalyptic, separatist, and apolitical perspectives of Stone, Fanning, and Lipscomb would soon be cast from the mainstream as heretics" (134).

Hughes writes clearly and organizes his book in a straightforward-dare we say rational-manner. The "Introduction" outlines his four major arguments, discusses the terms "sect" and "denomination," explains his methodology, provides an overview of the history of the Churches of Christ, and briefly discusses the historiography of the movement. Subsequent chapters, with the exception of chapter 2, begin with an introduction and, after developing the topic, end with a conclusion that reiterates the main points. While the restatement of major arguments contributes to the volume's clarity, their repetition sometimes becomes tiresome. On the other hand, they prevent the reader from being confused by the sheer number of individuals, mostly editors and preachers, who march across these pages. Photographs of many of these people also help the reader to keep them straight.

This volume will be indispensable to anyone doing research on or wishing to learn more about the Churches of Christ. It also contributes significantly to our understanding of American religious history, especially through its analysis of what happened to one manifestation of restorationism as the Churches of Christ experienced the twentieth century.

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Keener, Craig S. and Glenn Usry. *Black Man's Religion: Can Christianity Be Afrocentric?* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996. 249 pp. \$14.99.

The express purpose of this book, as stated in the Preface, is "to point out that Christianity is a Black religion as much as a White one" (7). As such, the authors grapple with two related issues: (1) precedents for an African Christian heritage in history; and (2) the bases on which African-Americans identify with that heritage.